



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

WANTED for the Branch

Does anyone have a working chest freezer surplus to requirements? We would like one large enough to accommodate a brood box to deal with propolis removal, waxmoth etc. It will be located at our extraction facility for use by the membership. Can collect. Contact: Bernard Brown at bernardnbrown@aol.com or 01926843416

Swarm Collection Workshop

The season may be a bit late starting so no doubt our girls are spending their enforced sojourn in the hive plotting their swarming plans with the aim of confounding us beekeepers once the spring eventually arrives and they can release all their pent up energy. So make a note in your diary for Clive Joyce's "not to be missed" **Swarm Collection Talk** on **Thursday 19th April** at **7.30** in the lecture hall at **BBKA** and perhaps..... just perhapsthis year we can have the last laugh.(Lol)

2018 Taster Days

Each year the Branch organises Beekeeping Taster days aimed at helping members of the public decide whether they would like to take up beekeeping, but also at providing a general appreciation of honey bees. This is a day-long event and takes the delegates through where honey bees can be kept, the equipment, cost and time involved, the beekeeper's year and how to become a beekeeper or help bees in other ways. Subject to the weather, we will also provide an opportunity for them to don a bee suit and handle bees, should they so wish, under the close supervision of a beekeeper in a local apiary.

There are two Taster Days in prospect this year, one on Sunday, 29th April at BBKA and another in early September

Typically, 12 – 20 delegates assemble at 09.45 a.m on the day and, after tea/coffee, the morning is spent on talks with plenty of opportunity for questions on the various aspects of bees and beekeeping outlined above. We also mount a small display including posters, skeps, hives, beekeeping tools, observation hive, hive products and perhaps honey tasting to keep the whole thing light hearted. After a "bring your own lunch" we repair to the apiary for the bee handling experience.

These taster days are one of the ways in which we fulfil our charitable aims and whilst not the primary objective, does act as a means of recruiting delegates onto our Introduction to Bee Keeping Course.

This year we are looking for member helpers to share their knowledge and enthusiasm and help make these interesting and informative events. There are several roles to be filled including setting up, meeting and greeting, dispensing refreshments, supervising honey tasting, conducting a group of wannabees for the hive opening session or giving one of the presentations. We do have a slide pack and a script if you are comfortable with presenting or just want to give it a go.

None all these roles require attendance for the whole day if you can only make part.

If interested please contact Bernard Brown at bernardnbrown@aol.com or phone 01926 843416.

Please also spread the word amongst friends, relatives, neighbours or work colleagues who may be interested in attending our April Taster Day directing them to our website www.warleambees.org.uk where they will find a booking form. The cost is £25.

Bernard Brown

Getting ready for the new season

It's been a long old winter hasn't it? However, much like the girls, the Warwick and Leamington Beekeepers have kept warm and on the move and a lot has happened since the colonies were tucked up for the winter down at the Dalehouse Lane Apiary. In early January, a team of hardy stalwarts moved all the hives up to our new training apiary site opposite the BBKA building, adjacent to the existing BBKA apiary. Twelve full colonies plus two nucs were installed, all strapped down and woodpecker proofed. Four weeks ago, a quick look in confirmed that all but two colonies had survived, had plenty of stores and were doing well. Of course, since then we have had the Beast from the East followed by his little brother Mini Beast, so fingers crossed that they were strong enough to survive those icy blasts!! BeeTradex was somewhat diminished because of the weather but it didn't deter Val and Maggie struggling through the snow with huge boxes of the new hives which will replace old stock.



Where is the heavy gang when you need them?

Training news

We had a full house of 51 participants on the Introduction to Beekeeping course this year and were again oversubscribed - such is the enthusiasm for beekeeping in Warwickshire. A huge thank you to all the helpers, speakers, organisers, tea makers – what a great team.

Hive building on Saturday 17th was the usual noisy, happy mix of banging, hammering, and chatting over coffee and cakes.



Three generations of hive builders!



What concentration....



All hands on deck

Practical apiary training sessions for the new beekeepers will be starting on Wednesday evenings from 11th April through to mid-September; to date we have 28 folk signed up. In addition 12 of our members are doing their Basic training with Jane Medwell and aiming to take the exam in the summer.

Maggie Curley

Nucleus Colonies for Sale

Local bees, bred at my Radford Semele Apiary.

A limited number of Overwintered Nucs will be available from April.

£95 Overwintered 5 frame Nuc - Grafted 2017 Queen

£110 Overwintered 6 frame Nuc - Grafted 2017 Queen

Ray Summers

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Beekeeping Supplies UK

A local company selling beekeeping equipment has recently been set up in Kenilworth by Mark Pettitt, a member of WLBK.

Beekeeping Supplies UK sells Bee Hives and Nucs, Frames and Wax, Bee Suits and jackets, Tools, Feeders, Queen Rearing equipment and much more.

To view the full range, visit the website www.beekeepingsuppliesuk.com.

Order can be placed on the website for home delivery or to collect from their house, 48, Grange Avenue, Kenilworth. CV8 1DD

Bee suits can be tried on for size before buying by prior arrangement - 01926 511768

As an introductory offer, there is a 10% discount off your first order until 30th April.

Hints and Tips

- Being able to pick up a queen is a very useful thing to do. Practice by picking up drones in the hive or better still, practice by picking up workers from inside a window when they become trapped in the house. When you pick them up by their wings, their abdomens curve away from you so that worker stings are out of harm's way! (Thanks to Tim Foden for this contribution)
- Colony development is really increasing this month. Supers need to be added to prevent the hive becoming overcrowded. This is best done when the brood box is about three-quarters full of bees. As with many aspects of bee keeping there are divided opinions on how to add successive supers. However if they are added just above the queen excluder then the young bees will be able to occupy this space more readily and thus relieve the pressure in the brood box.
- On fine days the bees will be collecting early spring pollen. Without it the colony cannot expand and will not be able to take advantage of the approaching spring blossom. Crocus, snowdrop and willow are the principle sources. Remove the mouse guards to assist the pollen delivery!
- Make hygiene a priority this year! Always take a bag or box with you during an inspection to put those odd bits of comb, lumps of wax and propolis in.
- If you are going to the Convention or thumbing through the new catalogues, keep your eyes open for good ideas about how to use your hive products to make a gift. There is always a Class in the Honey Show for a gift for a special occasion and with the Show on 13th September there is plenty of time to hone your skills.

If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to h.essex@virgin.net...

Thank you Helen Essex

Editor Roger Wilkes, email address is roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk or hard copy can be posted to him at:

12 Mercia Avenue, Kenilworth CV8 1EU. **Content to him for next month by April 27th latest.**

Please send in plain text, unformatted, using Microsoft Word or another common program.

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